

Message Text

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S E C R E T MEXICO 01470

NODIS

PLEASE PASS WHITE HOUSE

FOR BUSHNELL FROM AMBASSADOR

EO 11652: GDS-L
TAGS: PEPR, PARM, XF, CU, MX
SUBJECT: ROEL CONVERSATION WITH CASTRO

1. I SPOKE WITH FORMIN ROEL
BY TELEPHONE AT LOS PINOS
WHERE HE WAS MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT AND EXPLAINED
THAT THERE WAS A NEED TO SEE HIM THIS AFTERNOON ABOUT
A MATTER OF CONSIDERABLE URGENCY. ROEL SAID THAT HE WAS
UNABLE TO MAKE HIMSELF AVAILABLE BECAUSE OF AN IMPORTANT
DISCUSSION WITH THE PRESIDENT BUT WOULD FORWARD TO ME
IMMEDIATELY A SET OF NOTES THAT HE HAD TAKEN BASED ON
HIS DISCUSSION WITH CASTRO. THE FOLLOWING PARAGRAPHS
REPRESENT AN INFORMAL EMBASSY TRANSLATION OF ROEL'S
NOTES.

2. THERE IS CERTAINLY A SERIOUS SITUATION WHICH DERIVES
FROM THE INVASION BY SOMALIA, WHICH HAS SENT THE BULK
OF ITS MILITARY UNITS THERE (TO ETHIOPIA).

3. THE SOLUTION TO THIS SITUATION, HOWEVER, IS THE
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SECRET

PAGE 02 MEXICO 01470 262309Z

WITHDRAWAL OF SOMALI TROOPS FROM ETHIOPIAN TERRITORY.

4. NO ONE HAS THE INTENTION OF INVADING SOMALIA. THE
OBJECTIVE OF THE STRUGGLE IS TO REPEL THE TROOPS WHICH
HAVE ATTACHED THE TERRITORY OF ETHIOPIA.

5. THE CUBANS ARE HELPING THE ETHIOPIANS AGAINST SOMALI

AGGRESSION. OUR INSTRUCTORS ARE THERE TO TRAIN ETHIOPIAN TROOPS AND WE HAVE SPECIALISTS IN DIVERSE TYPES OF ARMS WITH INSTRUCTIONS TO PARTICIPATE IN BATTLES IF REQUIRED BY THE CIRCUMSTANCES.

6. ANY ESCALATION IN ETHIOPIA WILL SERIOUSLY COMPLICATE THE SITUATION IN THE REST OF AFRICA.

7. FURTHERMORE: THE INVASION OF ETHIOPIA BY SOMALI TROOPS HAS NO LEGAL OR POLITICAL JUSTIFICATION AND VIOLATES ALL THE PRINCIPLES OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN STATES (SIC--) WHICH ARE OPPOSED TO CHANGES IN THE FRONTIERS INHERITED FROM COLONIALISM. ANY STEP WHICH AGGRAVATES THE SITUATION WHICH HAS BEEN CREATED WOULD BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE UNITED STATES. WE WOULD DO WHAT IS NECESSARY TO PRESERVE THE INTEGRITY OF ETHIOPIA AND WE HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR. WE ARE CAPABLE OF DEFENDING OURSELVES AND WE ARE AT EASE.

8. IT SEEMS TO US THAT THE MOST REASONABLE SOLUTION IS THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOMALI TROOPS AND THAT THEY LEAVE ETHIOPIA IN PEACE. OTHERWISE, THE PROBLEM WILL BE MUCH MORE SERIOUS AND THE CUBANS WILL DO ALL THAT IS NECESSARY TO PRESERVE THE INTEGRITY OF ETHIOPIA. (END OF ROEL'S NOTES)

9. AS SOON AS I SEE ROEL I WILL SEEK HIS ASSESSMENT OF
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 MEXICO 01470 262309Z

THE OTHER QUESTIONS POSED IN REFTEL ABOUT CASTRO'S INTENTIONS, FLEXIBILITY, ETC., BUT IN VIEW OF THE HIGH LEVEL MEETING TODAY, I THOUGHT IT BEST TO TRANSMIT THESE NOTES ON HIS CONVERSATION WITH CASTRO AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
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